S
368.42
P30CHIP
WIN 2005

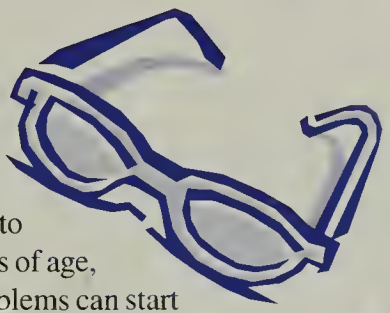
WINTER 2005

CHIPchat

Keeping CHIP Families Informed

Montana State Library
3 0864 1003 0870 2

Montana Children's Health Insurance Plan



Big Problems Can Hurt Little Eyes

The American Academy of Pediatrics urges parents to have their children's eyes tested as early as 6 months of age, but no later than three years of age. Severe eye problems can start in infancy or early childhood. The eye chart screening will catch some problems, but a complete vision exam is recommended.

A child with problems from birth or even young childhood may not know how things are supposed to look. Undetected problems can cause poor performance in school. School-aged children who have reading problems may have vision problems.

CHIP covers vision exams and eyeglasses. The benefit includes one pair of eyeglasses (frame and lenses) every 365 days for each child enrolled. New lenses may be covered sooner if there is a change in the eyeglass prescription. CHIP will only pay for Walman Optical frames and lenses. Ask the eye doctor to see the Walman Optical selection of frames. A family may choose to pay separately for extra features not covered by CHIP.

If you have questions about your CHIP vision benefits, refer to the dental and eyeglass brochure sent with your enrollment letter. Information is also on the CHIP website at www.chip.mt.gov or you can call CHIP toll-free at 1-877-543-7669.

What's inside...

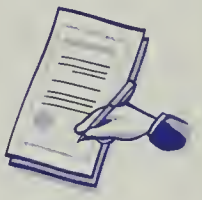
Big Problems Can Hurt Little Eyes
New Dental Providers!
Renew CHIP Each Year
The Right Stuff
Get Connected!
New CHIP Website
Reading Is Helpful!
Kick The Habit With Help
Kids Only!
CHIP Waiting List

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION
JUN 0 . 2005
MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
1515 E. 6th AVE.
HELENA MONTANA 59620

New Dental Providers!

Thirty-four new dentists signed up to be CHIP providers in 2004. We now have a total of 267 dentists practicing in 277 locations. The new dentists are located in Anaconda, Bigfork, Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Deer Lodge, Great Falls, Helena, Laurel, Lewistown, Libby, Missoula, Stevensville, and Whitefish, Montana. New dentists are also located in Williston, North Dakota and Sheridan, Wyoming. Please refer to the updated CHIP dental provider list recently mailed to all CHIP families by Blue Cross Blue Shield. You can also visit the CHIP website or call our toll-free number if you need the name of a dentist in your area, or have questions about the CHIP dental program.

Renew CHIP Each Year



Your child's CHIP eligibility is good for one year. You will be sent a renewal application in the mail 60 days before the coverage ends. You must return the completed application for CHIP to determine another year of coverage. Changes in your household, such as family size, income, or other insurance, could change your child's eligibility.

Please complete the renewal application and return it to CHIP as soon as possible. You will be sent a letter once an eligibility decision has been made.

The Right Stuff

Sports play a big role in your children's health and development. Help keep your children safe by making sure they have the proper equipment for the sport they play.

Safety and protective equipment includes helmets, goggles, mouth and shin guards, and wrist, elbow, knee, and shoulder pads. The safety gear should be sport-specific and required. Footwear also is an important key in sports safety. What your children wear on their feet should be in good condition and appropriate for the sport they are playing.

Make sure all of your children's sports equipment is checked on a regular basis. If the equipment is worn, damaged, or outdated it should be replaced immediately. Safety and protective gear should be comfortable while fitting your children properly. Also make sure the equipment is worn during practice as well as games.

Finally, check with the people who are coaching your children. The more trained and qualified a coach is, the better the chance he or she will view safety as a high priority. The right equipment can help ensure your children's safety and enjoyment during any game or physical activity.

Get Connected!

Starting with this issue of the CHIPchat, we will list some of the latest Internet websites dealing with children. Along the way, we will offer some sites just for kids with games, activities, quizzes, printables, and more!

These sites can help families learn, have fun, and find new ways to stay healthy. Please take an active role in your children's Internet experience. It is important to guide your children to age-appropriate sites and to help filter out offensive materials. Stay involved and ask your children about the sites they visit.

- Family Doctor, Parents & Children page:
  www.familydoctor.org/children.xml
- Kids Health, sponsored by the Nemours Foundation:
  www.kidshealth.org
- BAM! Body and Mind, United States CDC:
  www.bam.gov
- The Cool Spot, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism:
  www.thecoolspot.gov

New CHIP Website

You can now find our website at www.chip.mt.gov. Our e-mail address has also changed to chip@mt.gov. The same valuable information can still be found on our website. We look forward to your comments, questions, and concerns about CHIP.

Reading is Helpful!

Did you know that reading to your children encourages their overall development? Reading together can start at birth. Even pre-teens enjoy reading with their parents. Snuggling with your children to read can be magical. Recent studies suggest that children who have parents or other caring adults reading to them are less stressed and are healthier. Children also do better in school.

Story time gives your children attention. Reading together opens up communication between parents and their children. Reading opens up the world. So grab a good book and read to your children.

Kick The Habit With Help

Smoking is a harmful habit that can lead to lifelong health problems. The Montana Tobacco Quit Line can help people beat their addiction to smoking and smokeless tobacco. The Quit Line can provide counseling, self-help materials, free nicotine replacement therapy, and other services to help tobacco users quit.

Within 20 minutes after smoking the last cigarette, a person's heart rate drops. Twelve hours after quitting, carbon monoxide levels in the bloodstream drop to normal. Two weeks to three months after quitting, the risk for a heart attack begins to drop and lung function begins to improve. By the time a person has been smoke-free for a year, the risk of coronary heart disease drops to a level half that of a smoker's.

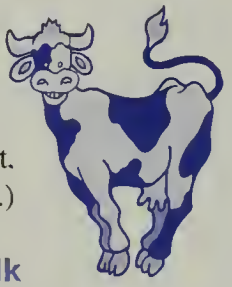
The health benefits continue to increase after a person has quit smoking for one year. In addition, the average person who smokes or uses smoke-less tobacco can save $1,500 to $2,000 a year by quitting now!

To call the Montana Quit Line, please dial toll-free 1-866-485-7848 (QUIT). The line is available 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday, and 8 a.m. to 4:40 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The only days the Quit Line will not be open are Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Kids Only!

Interesting facts about MILK!

- A dairy cow gives nearly 200,000 cups of milk in her lifetime .
- A cow eats about 6 ½ hours a day - the same amount of time children are in school.
- It takes about 10 pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese.
- Children need to eat 3 or 4 servings of the milk group daily. (Cheese, pudding made with milk, yogurt, and MILK.)



Easy 1-2-3 Milk Drink

- 1 cup milk
- 2 Tbsp. instant banana pudding mix
- 3 crushed vanilla wafers

Place all the ingredients in a tall glass or a container with a tight fitting lid. Shake or stir until mixed. Enjoy!

This is an easy way for children to get their recommended milk servings every day. Visit www.nutritionexplorations.org for more information.

CHIP
Montana
Children's Health Insurance Plan
PO Box 202951
Helena' MT 59620-2951

749

First Class Mail
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 89
Helena, MT

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!

Children's Health Insurance Plan
(CHIP) Toll Free:
1-877-543-7669
(1-877-KIDSNOW)

BlueCHIP
Blue Cross Blue Shield
of Montana
1-800-447-7828' ext. 8647

CHIP Website Address:
www.chip.mt.gov

CHIP E-mail Address:
chip@mt.gov

CHIP Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 202951
Helena' MT 59620-2951

The CHIP Waiting List is 1-2 Months...

CHIP has more than 300 newly eligible children on the waiting list. A renewal application will be sent to you 60 days before CHIP coverage ends. Be sure to complete and return your renewal application on time!